

Message Text

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21

ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 SCA-01 H-02 /014 W

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R 240826Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6112

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, LA

SUBJECT: VISIT OF AMCIT ALFRED STEINBERG TO LAOS

HONG KONG FOR LAHIRQERA

1. AMCIT ALFRED STEINBERG ARRIVED IN VIENTIANE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 16 TO REQUEST PERMISSION FROM NORTH VIETNAMESE EMBASSY HERE TO TRAVEL TO SAIGON TO SEE VIETNAMESE WOMAN HE HOPES TO MARRY. STEINBERG RECEIVED VISA FOR LAOS FROM FRENCH CONSUL IN HONG KONG. THIS VISA VALID FOR 15 DAYS.

2. STEINBERG'S REQUEST TO TRAVEL TO SAIGON WAS TURNED DOWN BY NORTH VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES IN VIENTIANE. WITH ASSISTANCE OF AMERICAN EMBASSY, STEINBERG SECURED APPOINTMENTS WITH OFFICIALS OF UNHCR AND ICRC IN VIENTIANE. OFFICIALS OF BOTH ORGANIZATIONS TOOK DOWN DETAILS OF HIS CASE AND PROMISED TO DO WHAT THEY COULD TO OBTAIN PERMISSION FOR STEINBERG'S VIETNAMESE FIANCE TO LEAVE VIETNAM TO REJOIN HIM. HOWEVER, UNHCR AND ICRC OFFICIALS HERE MADE IT PLAIN THAT IT WOULD BE MONTHS BEFORE THEY COULD EXPECT RESPONSE FROM VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES ON THIS MATTER.

3. STEINBERG THEN REQUESTED EXTENSION OF 15-DAY STAY PERMIT IN LAOS FROM LAO AUTHORITIES SO THAT HE COULD WAIT IN VIENTIANE FOR A REPLY FROM HIS FIANCE TO HIS MOST RECENT LETTERS AND CABLES TO HER, SENT FROM HERE. LAO POLICE TOLD STEINBERG THEY WOULD NEED "LETTER OF GUARANTEE"

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FROM EMBASSY TO EXTEND HIS VISA. CONSUL EXPLAINED TO

STEINBERG THAT SHE COULD NOT ISSUE SUCH A GUARANTEE AND
THE EMBASSY WAS RECOMMENDING THAT AMERICANS NOT STAY IN
LAOS UNLESS THEY HAD URGENT BUSINESS HERE AS WE UNABLE
TO PROVIDE NORMAL PROTECTIVE SERVICES TO CITIZENS.
CONSUL OFFIERED TO FORWARD ANY LETTERS OF CABLES
STEINBERG RECEIVED TO HIS ADDRESS IN HONG KONG. STEINBERG
ALSO ASKED CHARGE FOR LETTER OF GUARANTEE TO POLICE TO
PERMIT HIM TO REMAIN IN LAOS AND WAS REFUSED FOR SAME
REASONS AS CONSUL HAD GIVEN. STEINBERG INDICATED HE
WOULD RETURN TO HONG KONG WHEN PRESENT LAO VISA EXPIRES.
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